Grandma Williams: Female, Age 67

Background Data

*159 156 Understandably, it is difficult to find a match for a person like Weasel, particularly in the instance of a woman who occupies a similar status. The few [595] Klamath women who were like Weasel were not available for testing. Grandma [733] William's position is that of the mother of a large, disorganized nuclear family [83] like Weasel's, one marked by excessive drinking, violence, and promiscuity. [587] She is a vigorous, hearty, earthy old woman who has borne eight children by [871] three husbands. She is once divorced and twice widowed, her first husband [178] having died after three years of marriage, her third after thirty-five. She completed six years of school, all that was available when she was a girl, and she has lived and visited for extended periods in Washington state, Missouri, California, and Mexico.

[651] Grandma William's mother was a traditional Klamath wife and mother, and her father [464] for years an Agency Indian policeman. In her words, both her family of orientation and her family of procreation have had "bad luck." This bad luck consists of numerous bouts with the law over acts of violence. Her father died in the Federal penitentiary where he was serving a life sentence for murder. Several of her sons have killed men in the past. One is reputed to have killed at least five, and he is now in a State institution. Her other children are noted for their violence, and local informants say of Grandma that they cannot understand how such "a wonderful, good old lady managed to produce so many worthless children." [577] Few feel that she deserves such a fate. Community acceptance of Grandma Williams [177] is based upon several attributes, her steady, hard work, her commitment to raising a family, her devoutly Christian behavior, her espousal of dominant White values, and, especially, her hearty good humor. She has never accepted the guilt of either her father or her sons, maintains that they were falsely accused, and has worked steadily to secure her one son's pardon.

[91] Grandma Williams was raised in a Klamath speaking household and acquired her [871] English in school. She is very proud of her education and maintains that chil- [593] dren today are not so well tutored in the 3 Rs as she was. She claims that "I [603] can just about out-spell, out-write, and out-figure all of my kids." This is by [860] no means the only aggressive, competitive attitude she maintains towards her children, none of whom have ever quite lived up to her standards. In this respect, Clifton was once able to witness her training a grandson, who was an alert, spontaneous, active lad. The boy was made to be too polite and too formal, behaviors in keeping perhaps with urban middle-class society, but very much out of place on the reservation. All of her sons have maintained their main affiliations with the local "cowboy" culture, but they are ridiculed for their efforts at riding and calf roping because of their obesity and clumsyness, none of them coming near, in physical type, to the slim hipped, pencil shaped cowboy ideal. [657] She is an excellent example of a woman who, early in the reservation period, was [871] carefully tutored by conscientious minister-teachers in inappropriate behaviors [177] and values, and who has attempted to transmit these to her children. It would seem that she has produced over-trained, and mis-trained, hostile children, who promptly discovered that regardless of their veneer of "culture" they were rejected from many local circles because of their Indianness.

*159 157 156 Grandma is a direct, forceful person, another Klamath woman with a sharp wit (yet a less personal one than Aunt May's). She is quick to initiate interchanges and to attempt to knit together a strained situation. Yet her responses